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THE GOVERNOR'S GUARDIAN



**A COMEDY
IN THREE ACTS**



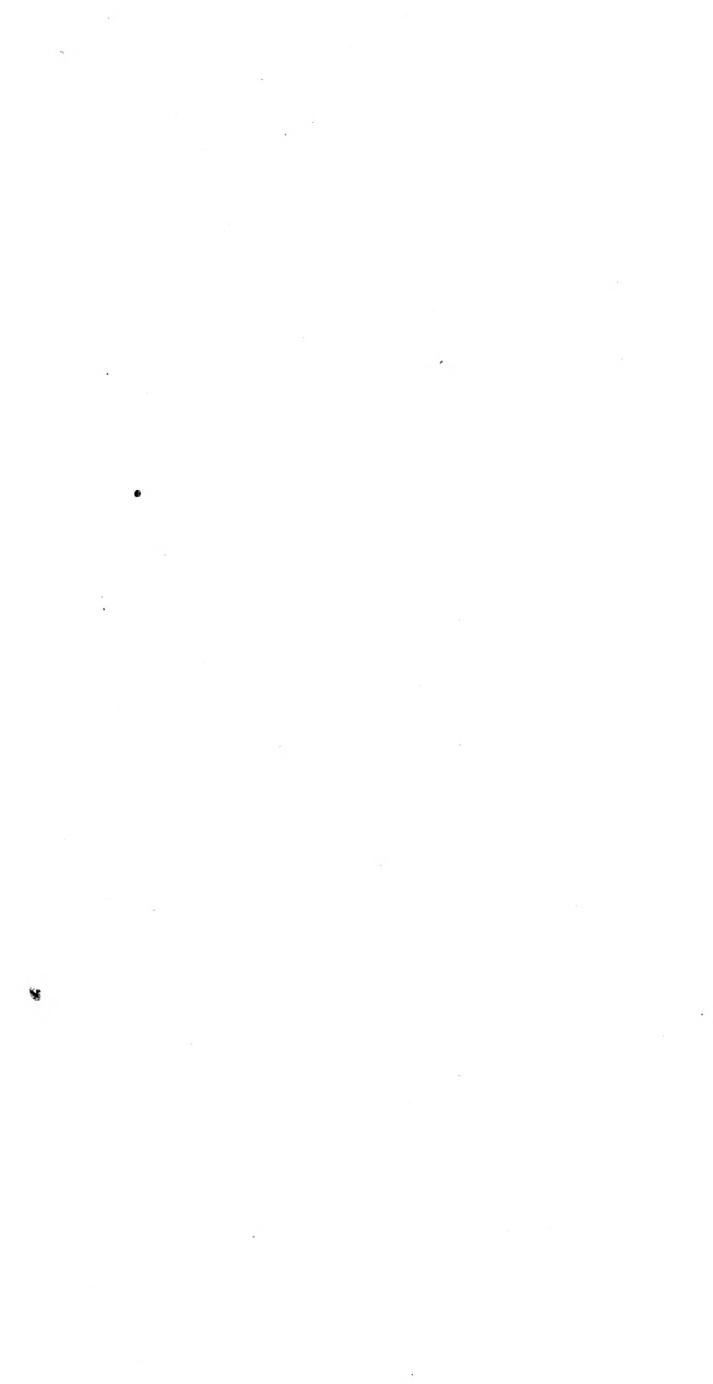
**BY
FREDERICK TIBBETTS**



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**Published by Tibbetts Press
Board of Trade, Columbus, O.**



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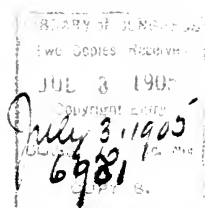
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PROPERTIES.

Act I.

Book case R. Piano in alcove C. Alcove curtained. Desk and chair L. Phone, desk light and push button on desk. Push button connected with bell that can be heard. Library table and chairs. Pens, ink and paper on desk and table. Three-sheet lithograph of variety actress in red tights, mounted on regular billboard. Chandelier that is attached and strong enough to bear the weight of a man.

Act. II.

Plaster bric-a-brac images, one being a Venus. Valise for Otway. Work basket and lace for Electa. Letter for Lizzie. Hemp rope, bottle of poison, revolver and large envelope for Ebenezer. Revolver for Jack. Bottle of poison for Otway.

Act III.

Cigar and match for Jack. Farewell note for Lizzie. Bottle poison for Otway. Ropes and two large handkerchiefs for DeGraff. Revolver in desk for Jack. Purse for Ebenezer. Pencils and paper for Ebenezer and Jack.



9 m 2 4 7 10 3 4

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

John (Jack) Harris.

Ebenezer Harris, Jack's Father.

Harold DeGraff, Manager of Trixie Feodore.

Otway Bellows, Servant in Harris Home.

Mrs. Electa Rutherford, Widowed Sister-in-Law of Ebenezer Harris.

Alice Rutherford, Mrs. Rutherford's niece

Trizie Feodore, a Variety Actress.

Lizzie, Domestic in Harris Home.

Two extra abductors may be
employed in last act.

Time: Present.

Scene: The Harris' Home.

Note.—A library set with an alcove left center for three acts or three distinct interiors may be used.

Act I.—Morning. Act II.—Evening. Act

III.—Following Evening.

THE GOVERNOR'S GUARDIAN

NOTE—The production of this play is prohibited except when written permission is given by Frederick Tibbetts, 251 Avondale Ave., Columbus, Ohio.

ACT I.

Scene—Handsomely furnished library in home of Ebenezer Harris.

Lizzie, very excited, discovered looking out of window. Loud talk without.

Lizzie (Pointing with hand)—Thirty-four, thirty-five, thirty-six, (standing on tip-toe) thirty-seven. What in the world are those men doing here? The front porch won't hold many more. Some of them are looking for others. It's a mob. They may burn the house. (turning.) Why don't Mr. Ebenezer come down" (looking again.) They are getting ready to do something.

Enter Jack

(from Alcove, throwing wide the curtains.)

Jack—Good morning, father. Hello. the governor isn't up yet. Who is getting ready to do something, Lizzie?

Lizzie—O, Mr. Jack! Who are these men?

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Jack (Looking out of window and laughing)—By Jove! The Governor's got his hands full this time. (Continued loud talk without.)

Lizzie—There's thirty-seven of 'em. Mr. Jack. What are they going to do? (Trembling.)

Jack—It's all right, Lizzie. (Aside) I'll at least know where to find the Governor when I want him. (Turning) It's this way, Lizzie; the Governor wanted a valet, an errand boy, a male servant, so he put an advertisement in this morning's Journal. His "ad" read: "Wanted: An able-bodied valet. Good pay. Call at 10 a. m. Thursday, 92 Gerard Ave." And this is the outcome.

(Continued loud grumbling.)

(Looking at watch) It is five minutes until ten. I'll go down and tell them that the Governor will see them right away. (Exit Jack, door Right.)

Enter Mrs. Electa Rutherford, Alcove.

Electa—Lizzie, what does it all mean? (Pointing to window.)

Lizzie—Mr. Ebenezer's—they're valets—errand boys—male servants—they're his——

Electa (looking out)—What, all of them?

Lizzie (nodding head in affirmative)—Yes'm. There are thirty-seven—and more comin'——

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Electa throws hands in the air
as Alice enters.

Alice—O, Auntie, (catching Mrs. Electa as if in fear she is about to fall) What is it, dear? (guiding Mrs. Electa to chair where she sinks in utter helplessness and speaks as if with last breath, as she points to window).

Electa -- Valets -- errand boys -- male servants——

Alice (looking out of the window and turning to leave)—I'm going to find Jack——

Electa (recovering immediately and following quickly)—No, you are not. (Exit both C.)

Enter Ebenezer Harris

(by putting head in at door L.)

Ebenezer—Have they gone, Lizzie?

Lizzie—Who, Mr. Ebenezer?

Ebenezer—All of them, but more particularly that somewhat distinguished but altogether noisy son of mine. I do hate noise. John Harris, Lizzie, has he gone?

Lizzie—Yes, Mr. Ebenezer. He just went out to tell these men that you would soon see them. (More noise without.)

Ebenezer—Men; what men? Who is making all that racket?

Lizzie—Your valets, your errand boys, your male servants——

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Ebenezer—My what? Well, tell them to be quiet. You know I hate noise. (Looking out of window) (more noise) (whistling). That ad. (Opening window) (louder noise) (and waving his hand) Go away. I don't want a valet, an errand boy, a male servant. (Loud protests). Do you hear me? (loudly) Go away and don't make so much noise. I'll have you arrested for trespass (very loud talk, lowering suddenly as window is closed by Ebenezer) (Going quickly to desk he telephones) Seven-twenty-nine. No, not eleven—seven. Yes, seven-twenty-nine. Hello, this— Hello—Is this the Journal office? Well, stop that ad. There 're a thousand men out in front of my house. What? Then stop the paper. I'll never pay another cent. Call these men off and send 'em up, one at a time. What's that? Who—what (more noise) Lizzie, stop that noise—who am I—I'm a fool to give you that ad. (Hanging up receiver with force.)

Lizzie—O, Mr. Ebenezer, what shall we do?

Ebenezer—Face the music, Lizzie; that's what we'll do. Go to the door, Lizzie; that's a good girl, Lizzie; bring 'em in one at a time, mind you, one at a time. Don't let two of 'em in at the same time, Lizzie; they'd make too much

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noise and I do hate noise. (More noise. Lizzie hesitates.)

Lizzie—Oh, Mr. Ebenezer! (More noise.)

Ebenezer—Hurry, Lizzie. Don't be afraid. Be a man, Lizzie. Let 'em in—one at a time——(Exit Lizzie R.)

(Picking up paper) Damn that Journal! Who would have thought that little three-line ad. would have made so much noise.

Enter Lizzie, followed by Otway
Bellows, who stands near door.

Exit Lizzie through Alcove.

Ebenezer—Well, sir, what do you want?

Otway (In confusion)—You-er ad. in the Journal, sir. I came to try for the job, sir.

Ebenezer—Eh—job? O yes, you want to be a valet, an errand boy, a male servant.

Otway--Ye-es, sir.

Ebenezer—How did you happen to be the first one to get in?

Otway—I was the first one at the door, sir.

Ebenezer—What time did you come?

Otway—Five o'clock this morning, sir.

Ebenezer—From five 'til ten. You're hired.

Otway—Thank-ye, s——

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Ebenezer—Wait a minute. What's your name?

Otway—Otway Bellows, sir.

Ebenezer—Otway Bellows, well (Otway, come this way. (Otway moves nearer) How old are you?

Otway—I don't know, sir.

Ebenezer (Rapidly)—Are you sober. (Otway nods head in affirmative) honest, quick to obey, quiet, for I do hate noise, acquainted with the city? Can you shine shoes, keep clothes clean, operate a typewriter, take stenographic notes, wait on table, perform general house work, answer the 'phone? In short, will you obey my every instruction and pay no attention to my son, John?

Otway—Yes-es, sir (more noise without.)

Ebenezer—You're hired. Go down to the door and dismiss that mob. Tell 'em you're hired. Tell 'em the Journal lied. Tell 'em anything. Get 'em out. (Exit Otway R.) They'll ruin the lawn. (Going to window) (Continuous grumbling, growing gradually less) (Coming back from window Ebenezer, seeming to scent danger, quickly secures his hat from desk and makes rapid exit L.)

Enter Jack, C.

Jack (looking around) — I wonder where the Governor is. He must have come out. (Exit R.)

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Enter Ebenezer, L.

(Putting head in at door first.)

Ebenezer—The coast is clear again (entering and seating himself) O. my dear boy, your most devoted parent only asks for forty-eight hours and then you can cast him off—forever. Where is this—way, that way, that Otway? (Rings bell, two rings.) I must give him his instructions. (Rings bell.)

Enter Lizzie.

Lizzie—Did you ring, sir?

Ebenezer (Mockingly)—Did **you** ring, sir. No, my adorable little Lizzie, I did not ring. I pushed the button and the bell did the ringing. Where is Otway?

Lizzie—Who, sir?

Ebenezer—Otway, the new man.

Lizzie—You mean the valet, the errand boy, the man servant? I'll call him. (Exit R.)

Ebenezer (Mockingly)—The valet, the errand boy, the man servant.

Enter Otway, R.

(With a bandage over one eye, his coat torn and one arm in a sling.)

Oh! Here you are. What the devil is the matter with you?

Otway—I dismissed the mob, sir.

Ebenezer—Did you hear me ring?

Otway—I heard the bell, sir.

Ebenezer—O, you did, did you? You heard the bell. Well, after this, when

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you hear that bell ring twice, you are wanted. Do you understand?

Otway—Ye-es, sir. Shall I start when I hear at once, sir?

Ebenezer—Yes, but stop if it doesn't ring twice, for one ring calls Lizzie.

Otway—Then I guess I'll come, sir, for I like to be where she is. She tied up my arm and put this bandage on my head. I believe I love her, sir. (hanging head bashfully).

Ebenezer—Is that so? You will probably continue to wear a bandage on your head if you answer that bell when it only rings once. Do you understand? Now, look here, Otway Bellows, I didn't hire you to wait on Lizzie; you're to wait on me. Do you understand?

Otway—Yes-es, sir.

Ebenezer—Now, to business. I must tell you a secret. Come here to the window. Do you see that picture yonder on that bill board?

Otway—The one with the red legs, sir?

Ebenezer—The one in red tights, Otway. That is Miss Trixie Feodore. She is my fiance.

Otway (Eyeing Ebenezer incredulously)—You—mean,—sir—you—are going to marry that?

Ebenezer (Sternly)—Miss Trixie Feodore, Otway. Now, I want you to pay

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close attention. If my son Jack knew of this alliance before we are safely married, I fear he would raise serious objections.

Otway (Meekly)—You think he'd raise hell, sir?

Ebenezer—Exactly, Otway; now I want to avoid meeting Jack until after the event and if you see him coming you must tell me, or if he inquires for me, you must lie to him, Otway. Tell him anything but the truth. Do you understand? (Looking up quickly, scenting danger.) Wait here until I come back. (Exit L.)

Enter Jack, R.

Jack—Hello, O you are the valet, the—

Otway—Ye-es, sir.

Jack—Where is father? They told me he was here.

Otway—That's right. He **was** here.

(Ebenezer looks in L. and shakes
fist at Otway.)

Jack—Where is he now?

Otway (Pointing left)—Over there. Jack starts left) That is, he was over there (pointing to window) looking at his fi-an-ce.

Jack—His what?

Otway—But he's gone out that (pointing to alcove) way. I remember now he stopped and played on the piano.

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Jack—The Governor played on the piano?

Otway—Yes, he played "Wait 'Til the Clouds Roll By."

Jack—Otway, (slowly) you're a liar. If there were no tables in the house the Governor might be accused of playing poker on the piano, but music—never. Now, look here, Otway, you and I might just as well understand each other right now. I want you to keep me posted on the Governor's actions, and I want the truth. If there is any lying to be done, lie to the Governor. He's paying the money and expects to be cheated. Now, where is the Governor?

Otway (Pointing right)—He went out the front way a while ago. I don't know where he is, but I guess he's across the street looking at the bill board.

Jack (Eyeing him closely)—We don't understand each other very well yet, but we haven't time now. I must find the Governor. (Exit R.)

Enter Ebenezer.

Ebenezer (Mockingly)—"Wait 'Till the Clouds Roll By," fool; I don't know one note from another. But we must act quickly. Just a minute. (Seating himself at desk and writing. Otway sits at table and writes quickly. Ebenezer tears up paper and writes address on card. As he rises Otway rises.)

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Ebenezer—Here, Otway, never mind a note. Here's the address (handing card) of Miss Trixie Feodore. Go, bring her here. I must see her right away. Do you understand?

Otway—Ye-es, sir. Mr. Ebenezer, (handing paper) can you advance me fifty on this?

Ebenezer—This, what's this? (Reading.) "For value received, within sixty days I promise to pay Ebenezer Harris the sum of fifty dollars. Signed, Otway Bellows." Why, man, that isn't a negotiable note. (Handing back note.)

Otway (Downcast)—What is a negotiable note, sir?

Ebenezer—Why, mine or Mr. Morgan's or Mr. Rockefeller's. (Exit laughing, L.)

Otway (Looking at note)—And he said he couldn't tell one note from another. Well, I must go and get (looking at card) Miss Trixie Feodore, seventy-five north (Looking out of window) I don't need that address. (Tears up card and exit R.)

Enter Electa.

(Going to window, then looking around library.)

Electa—I wonder what he's done with 'em.. Well, I've commenced to pack. I'm going back to the farm. It kept me busy looking after Ebenezer and keeping Jack

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away from Alice, but I'm not going to put up with thirty-seven valets, errand boys and male servants, not I.

Enter Alice.

Alice, dear, come here and sit down. The time is ripe for just a little heart to heart talk between us two.

Alice—What is it, Auntie?

Electa—I don't know just where to begin. In the first place, you know, you have no home except that provided by relatives who love you dearly.

Alice—What am I to do? I could give music lessons. I might even teach school, but you will not listen to any of these plans.

Electa—No, Alice, you shall never want for a home while I live, but in order to be prepared for what is to follow I want you to realize your true condition. You have no reasonable expectations.

Alice—Aunt Electa, I—

Electa—Now, child, if Jack Harris makes any advances I want you to realize the vast—

Alice—Jack Harris!

Electa—The vast difference in your stations in life. You have nothing—he has—or can have everything. His father is ridiculously wealthy, and he will be. He is college bred. You have been

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through a country school; but worst of all, he is a Harris—you are a Rutherford.

Alice—Aunt Electa, all this is a waste of time. Jack Harris is a relative of yours, not mine, and never will be. I like Jack, but there is one more, a far greater reason, than those you have named why I wouldn't marry him.

Electa—And that?

Alice—The man I marry must love me, not my prospects. He must have proven himself before the world so that I may know that when he says to me "I love you," there will be no shadow of doubt. And then, if I love him—no question of station, money, schooling, no, nor even name, shall have a particle of bearing on our actions.

Electa—Nevertheless, I think you and I had better go back to the farm. We leave here day after tomorrow.

Alice—Very well, Aunt Electa. (Exit Alice, C.)

Electa—She is worth all the money Jack will ever own but—

Enter Jack.

Jack—Hello, Auntie. Do you know where the Governor is? (Electa shakes head negative.) Well, I wanted to speak to you, Aunt Electa.

Electa—Alice is going home day after tomorrow.

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Jack—O, she is, is she? Well, it isn't about Alice I wish to speak. (Alice appears in alcove and overhears.) I don't care anything about Alice. I don't care when she goes home.

Electa (Seeing Alice)—Day after tomorrow.

(Exit Alice.)

Jack—Well, never mind, Alice. I want to make a confession to you, Aunt Electa.

Electa (Loking up quickly)—Jack, what do you mean?

Jack—Now, don't get excited. I haven't killed anyone. I'm in love.

Electa (Breathlessly)—Alice?

Jack—No, not Alice. You seem determined that I should take up with Alice. I believe you brought her here with that intention.

Electa—She came on your father's invitation.

Jack—O, of course, I didn't mean—

Electa—Who is she, Jack?

Jack—Now, never mind who she is or what she is like. I couldn't describe her any more than I could describe a sunset in the Golden Gate, or the birth of a rose—or—or—Alice.

Electa—Jack, are you telling me the truth?

Jack—Sure. Now, when I found out about two we—two months ago—

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(Walking to window.)

Electa (Aside)—Two months. He has known Alice two weeks.

Jack—That I,—that she,—that we—well, when I learned the truth, I realized what a confounded fool I have been. Of course, father's got plenty of money and all that, but since I left college what have I done to win the respect of a girl like Al— (Electa looks up quickly) like a Golden Gate sunset? But when I saw her. Well, since then everything is different. I have determined on a business career. With the money mother left me I am buying Great Eastern. I have about one-third of the entire stock now, and if I can secure a majority of the shares, well, you know, my future will be assured.

Electa—Good, Jack. I am glad, very glad and I wouldn't wonder if I could help you a little. I have five hundred shares of Great Eastern that you can vote to suit yourself.

Jack—You dear old aunt. Well, you are a jewel. Now, if you would agree to one more proposition—

Electa—Alice?

Jack (Laughing)—No, not Alice. Just agree with me that father shall not know about this matter until I make good; although I am afraid I'll have to go to him for a little spare change before this

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job is finished. In the meantime I'll keep you posted. Let me thank you again for your interest. I may tell you who she is in a day or two. You say Alice is going home tomorrow?

Electa—Day after tomorrow (eyeing him intently) Jack, you had better be truthful with me or—or you will lose that stock.

Jack—By the way, Auntie, you might sign the stock over to me as soon as you conveniently can.

Electa—Just as soon as you tell me who she is, Jack, and if I approve. (Exit laughing L.)

Jack (Whistling)—I guess I'd better not depend on that five hundred——

Enter Alice, C.

(Dressed to leave, carrying suit case.)

Hello, Alice, going out?

Alice—I am going home—to Aunt Electa's, Mr. Harris.

Jack—Mr. Harris. (Whistling.) Why, Aunt Electa said you were not going until day after——

Alice—I am going today—now, Mr. Harris.

Jack—O, come now, don't Mr. Harris me. You can call me Jack; we have known each other for——

Alice—Two weeks and——

Jack—Well, isn't that long enough
to——

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Alice—I think so, that's the reason I'm——

Jack—Hang it, I didn't mean just that. I suppose it would take you forever, but it didn't take me two days to know—to know that I loved you, Alice.

Alice—Mr. Harris, I will not——

Jack—I do, Alice. I love you—don't go just yet. Give me a moment.

Alice (Angrily)—Jack Harris, I accidentally overheard you, not ten minutes ago, tell Aunt Electa that you didn't care anything about me—that you didn't care when I went home.

Jack—Then, until you heard that, you too cared? O. Alice, I was lying to Aunt Electa. She has some stock that I've——

Alice—And you think it flatters me when a self-confessed liar tells me he loves me?

Jack—Alice, it was for your sake and mine. Aunt Electa seems determined that you and I shall not care for each other—insurmountable barriers and all that; but I love you, Alice. It is for you I am trying to redeem the past. It is for you I am——

Alice—Lying, yes lying to one of the best-hearted of old ladies.

Jack—Alice, a man can afford to be saving of the truth with all but the one woman. He needs it all—all the truth

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that is in him when he looks into the eyes of the woman he loves. It is to you, Alice, all the truth that is in me shall speak. I love you dearly. Can't you give me the least bit of assurance that you believe—that you can return my love?

Alice—Yes, I can return it right away, unopened. Jack Harris, I shall never marry any man's—any man's father's money.

Jack—Alice, I am making a way for myself. In a short time I will be at the head of one of the largest and most prosperous corporations in the country. Father knows nothing of it. Aunt Electa can tell you. Alice, when I have made a name for myself, when I have made good, tell me you will listen to me and believe me. (Putting his arm about her.)

Alice (Hiding her face)—O! Jack——
Enter Electa.

Electa—Alice! What are you doing?

Alice (Picking up suit case)—I am—I am going home.

Electa—Not until I go, Alice, and I am not sure but I am needed here. (Ringing bell twice.)

Enter Otway, R.

Otway (Out of breath)—I've got her out here in the hall, sir.

Jack—Got who, man? Bring her in.

Otway—Ye-es, sir. (Exit R.)

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Enter Ebenezer, C.

Jack—Father, at last I've—

Enter Otway, R.

(Carrying bill board back to front.)

Otway—Here she is, sir.

Ebenezer—She? What have you there?

Otway (Turning bill board, exposing lithograph of variety actress in red tights)—Your fi-an-ce, sir.

Ebenezer (Falling over back of chair)
--The devil!

Jack—Trixie Feodore!

Electa—Jack Harris, that hussy!

Alice (Turning away)—O, Jack!

Quick Curtain.

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ACT II.

Scene: Same as Act I may be used or a different interior with practically same entrances.

(Otway discovered packing an old valise. After removing his necktie and packing it carefully in his valise he secures a piece of bric-a-brac, and cautiously packs it. He then removes his collar and after packing it in the valise he secures a small plaster Venus, which he places in the valise. He then removes his coat and vest and after packing the vest he puts on the coat and buttons it, turning collar up. He then closes valise, not having spoken. Closing and picking up valise, he looks around the room.)

Otway (Tragically)—Farewell ambition. Farewell love—and all. I am going back to the farm. (He is about to leave, R., when bell rings twice. Hesitating.) Farewell sweet bells. No more shall ring Otway thisway and thatway. (Bell rings twice vigorously. Hesitating he places grip on chair and slowly exits L.)

Enter Lizzie, C.
(Carrying dust brush.)

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Lizzie (Discovering valise) — What's this? (Opening valise) A vest! (Taking out vest) And little Venus! (Taking out Venus and placing on table) Why, the place is being robbed! This collar (Taking out collar) That's Otway's. I know it by this spot of blood. It was there when I bandaged his head. So-so, Mr. Otway, you are not only a valet an errand boy, a male servant, you are a thief! (Taking up Venus) And you, my pretty Venus; was he kidnapping you, or eloping with you? I have a rival in the affections of me lord.

Enter Otway, L.

Oh! Here you are—you—

Otway—Valet, errand boy, male servant, me no more, mademoiselle. I have been fired.

Lizzie—And you are leaving——

Otway—Nothing that will pack in my valise. (Taking up valise in one hand and vest in the other.)

Lizzie—O, Otway, where will you go?

Otway—To take that bill board back where I found it.

Lizzie—Then you are not discharged? You are not going away?

Otway—Yes, discharged; that is, I have been given my two weeks' notice.

Lizzie—What might not happen in two weeks' time?

Otway—Great affairs of pith and mo-

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ment. I might fall in love with you one moment and out the next, fair bandager of busted heads.

Lizzie—Nay, nay. You love me not.

Otway—Why not? Why, nay—nay? 'Tis the cry of the stable, not of the parlors. (Bell, one ring. Lizzie starts to leave.)

Otway (Catching her)—O, dearest Lizzie, if you were not so busy, I could a tale of love unfold. (Bell, one ring vigorously.)

Lizzie—(Pointing to bell)—Hear, hear, I must go.

Otway (Holding her close)—Here, here, you must stay. Think you not I shall be heard above the ringing of the menial's bell? Lizzie, dearest Lizzie, I love you. I have loved you ever since you bandaged up my throbbing head; would that you could bandage up my throbbing heart instead. (Both arms around her, holding her close, hiding her face.) O, Lizzie, give to me some token that will ease a heart that's broken. Lizzie, do you love me?

Lizzie (With her face hidden under his arm, she gives the two grunts signifying "yes.")

Otway (Still holding her close)—Come to my arms.

Lizzie (Looking up dazed)—Where am I?

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Otway (Holding her at arms' length)—Give me a kiss. (Bell, two rings. Otway starts up quickly, releasing Lizzie.)

Lizzie (Catching him as he is about to answer the bell)—Is it the bell and a breach of promise? (Bell, two rings, vigorously.)

Otway (Struggling)—Let go, Lizzie. Don't you hear that bell?

Lizzie (Shaking her head in negative and giving the two negative grunts)—Otway, I guess you can take the token, if your heart is broken. (Bell, two rings.)

Enter Electa, R.

(Unobserved.)

(At sound of bell Otway starts and then throws arms about Lizzie and they make exit hugging and kissing. Electa watches them and then sits down near table, placing thereon her work basket. She takes up needle work grumbling and, shaking her head, eventually breaking out distinctly.)

Electa—Jack Harris, I don't care what becomes of you now. To think that you would take up with that masterpiece of town gossip, Trixie Feodore. I suspected as much when that male servant brought in that horrid picture with her shameless red hose. Brother Ebenezer tells me my suspicions are correct and that he will cut John off with barely enough to live on. Poor Ebenezer—I am

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really sorry for Ebenezer—such servants! The servant question in this house is getting to be a serious proposition. (Enter Lizzie, L., who passes through without looking up, Exit R.) There goes one of them now. I shall speak to Brother Ebenezer about her disgraceful actions with that male—(Enter Otway, L., who passes through following Lizzie without looking up. Exit R.) Hot on the scent. This is too much. (Starting toward L.)

Enter Trixie Feodore, Harold DeGraff and Lizzie, R.

Lizzie--A lady and gentleman to see Mr. Ebenezer.

Electa--Call him, Lizzie. (Exit Lizzie, L.) (Aside) I believe she is the same. (Trixie swings around room, lifting her skirt so as to display a red stocking.) The same (With emphasis.) (Stiffly) Will you be seated? Mr. Harris will be here directly. (Otway enters R., following Lizzie without looking up, Exit R. Electa seats herself opposite side from callers, intending to stay.)

Enter Ebenezer, C.

Trixie (Running to him—O, Ebe—

Ebenezer—Eh, eh—(Glancing at Electa) Mrs. Rutherford, allow me to present Jack's friend, Miss Trixie—(Electa rises stiffly and disdainfully, swinging out without speaking, Exit C.) (Trixie laughs.)

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Ebenezer (Whistling) — Well, she's gone anyway. I'm awful glad to see you, Trixie girl (Embracing her), but you nearly——(noticing DeGraff for the first time) Who's that?

Trixie—Why, papa. This is Mr. DeGraff, my manager. He is an attorney-at law.

DeGraff (Roughly)—Yes, DeGraff—I came to see fair play between you two.

Ebenezer—O, you did, did you? Trixie, girl, what are we going to play?

Trixie—There, there, you dear old boy. (Putting her arm about him.)

DeGraff—"The moth and the flame," with you as the flame. Say, you don't seem to realize that Miss Feodore is a great actress. Her annual income would make Carnegie jealous. Do you expect her to give up all that for you?

Ebenezer (To Trixie)—You are willing, eh, pretty?

Trixie—Yes, Ebe, but don't you love me enough, just to make a little settlement, just a little, Ebe, say, enough to keep me in hosiery, if anything would happen to you?

Ebenezer—What makes you think anything's going to happen to me, Trixie, girl?

Trixie—Because you are so stingy.

Ebenezer—O, come now, haven't I bought all the red silk in the market

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until even the market is tight?

Trixie—You're all right, Ebe, and I love you, but I think you might let go—just a little—just enough to let me know that I am not taking a false step. I am giving up the stage, it's suppers after the show, the applause, the attentions of the fools, young as well as old. And then again, Ebe, you might not live long, and I might be cast out on a cold, cold world.

Ebenezer—Don't, Trixie, wixey, not the cold, cold—what makes you think I'll not live long?

Trixie—You know, Ebe. I hope you'll live forever.

Ebenezer—It's a settlement you want. Well, I guess that's all right. (Rattling money in pocket) I guess your Ebe can make a settlement. How much shall it be?

DeGraff—Here's the papers.

Ebenezer—We won't need any papers.

Trixie—O, yes, we will, Ebe. It's the only proper way. Marriage settlements—you understand.

Ebenezer—Let me see the paper.

DeGraff—You'll find it all right. All ready to be filled in and signed. (Handing paper.)

Ebenezer (Examining)—You put the amount here? (Indicating lines.)

DeGraff—That's right, on those two blank lines.

Ebenezer—Two lines; you must imagine I'm going to give away enough to build a public library.

Trixie—Now, Ebe, you're not going to be short with your little Trixie, are you?

Ebenezer (Handing paper to DeGraff)—Fill it out. I'll sign.

DeGraff—That's the talk.

Trixie—O, you dear—and tonight after the show. You'll be around at the theatre, won't you, Ebe?

Ebenezer—O, I'll be there—I'll be there, Trixie, girl. How long has it been since I've missed a night. Who says that I am getting old? Am I not ardent, Trixie, wixey?

Trixie—You're just the bestest boy in the world.

DeGraff (Seating himself at table)—Well, how much shall we fill it out for?

Enter Lizzie, C.

(About to pass without stopping.)

(To Lizzie)—Here, girl, just a minute.

(To Ebe)—We'll need a witness, you know. Well, how much?

Ebenezer (Looking lovingly at Trixie)—Make it—make it two hundred and fifty dollars.

DeGraff—Fifty thousand dollars. Why, man, you don't know her worth.

Ebenezer—I say, two hundred and fifty—

DeGraff—O, well, that's pretty good.

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(Writing) Two hundred and fifty—
(Winking at Trixie) thousand. Here
you are, now your name; sign it here.

Ebenezer (Taking pen and smiling at
Trixie)—This is all for you. (Signs.)

DeGraff—Here, girl, you sign here.
(Lizzie signs) And I'll sign. (Exit Liz-
zie, C.)

Enter Otway, R.

(He immediately retires, C.)

Ebenezer—You'll sign? (Looking over
shoulder) Give me that paper!

DeGraff—Just as soon as you make
payment.

Ebenezer—You have made it out for
two hundred and fifty—two hundred and
fifty—thousand. (Falls in chair.)

DeGraff—Yes, and you've signed.

Trixie—O, come, my dear boy, don't
take it so hard. You know you love
your little Trixie, wixey. (Ebenezer
looks up appealingly but speechless.)

DeGraff—Come on, Trix. This isn't
half bad. Good day, Harris. (Ebenezer
grunts.)

Trixie—Don't forget to be down to-
night. Everything will come out all
right. Bye-bye, old boy. (Exit DeGraff
and Trixie.)

Ebenezer (Trying to recover himself)
—Trixie—DeGraff—What's in a name?

Enter Lizzie L.

(Lizzie passes through without stopping.
Exit, R.)

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(Ebenezer tries to recover.)

Enter Otway, L.

(Following Lizzie, Exit R.)

Enter Electa and Alice, C.

Electa—Ebenezer, Jack Harris is—
Ebenezer, what is the matter?

Ebenezer (Mumbling)—Two hundred
and fifty—

Electa (Shaking him)—Ebenezer, what
are you talking about?

Alice—O, Auntie, did he faint?

Ebenezer (Rousing and seeing Alice
and Electa, then falling back) Jack—
Jack, how could you do it?

Electa (Sternly)—Alice, go to your
room. It is not fit for you to hear.

Alice—You will call me, Auntie, if
there is anything I can do?

Electa—Yes, dear. (Exit Alice.) Now,
Ebenezer, tell me all about it.

Ebenezer—Eh, tell you; no Eclecta.
not now; tomorrow. O, Jack—Jack!

Electa—Ebenezer, if I am intruding I
can leave within the hour.—I—

Ebenezer—No—don't go. I must lean
on some one in my hour of trial, Eclecta.

Electa—Electa, not Eclecta. Ebenezer.

Ebenezer—Ec—Electa, I am getting
old and to think, just to think, that the
flower of my life—my only child—my
baby—my Jack—

Electa—There, there, brother, maybe
it isn't so bad after all—

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Ebenezer—Yes, it is! Eclecta. It's terrible. It's disgraceful, positively disgraceful. O, that I should live to—to—

Electa—I knew it. You don't need to tell me more. That horrid red leg—that—and Jack.

Ebenezer. (Nodding)—Yes, Eclecta, what am I to do?

Electa—Do—Ebenezer—do; why, your course is clear.

Ebenezer—What, shall I pay the money?

Electa—Not another cent, Ebenezer. I'd even cut off his allowance until he comes to his senses.

Ebenezer—But DeGraff, he might—he has murder in his eye.

Electa—DeGraff, who is DeGraff?

Ebenezer (Whistling) — Why—Eclecta—

Electa—Electa.

Ebenezer—Why, Electa, hasn't Jack worked me all his life and isn't that graft? (Rising) But come, Ec—Electa. I don't want your visit spoiled. Don't let this worry you. The old man will find a way. Yes, Electa, I'll save Jack from that—from that Trixie Feodore, yes Ec—Electa, I'll save Jack if I have to marry her myself.

Electa—Ebenezer!

Ebenezer—Parental duty. Ec—Electa. I owe it to my son and heir. He has

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been a good boy, Jack has. There is no other way.

Electa—Stop and think. Ebenezer. There may be another way. Ebenezer. why couldn't you buy her off?

Ebenezer—What, two hundred and fifty thous— (Sinking in chair) No. Ec—
Electa—I'll marry her first.

Enter Lizzie, L.

(Passes through without looking up.

Exit R.)

Enter Jack, C.

Jack—Hello—What's the matter here? What's the matter with the Governor, Aunt Electa?

Enter Otway, L.

(Following Lizzie. Exit R.)

Electa—Matter enough, you beast.

Jack—O, come, Aunt Electa, you're joking. Just as soon as you fix up those shares I'll only need two hundred and fifty—

Ebenezer—Who said, "Two hundred and fifty—?"

Jack—Never mind, father, this is a secret between Aunt Electa and me.

Electa (Stiffly)—Young man, you and I have no secrets. (Rings bell, one ring.)

Enter Lizzie, R.

Call Miss Alice.

Lizzie—Yes'um. (Exit, C.)

Jack—Alice, good. I have been looking for her all the afternoon. I want to

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tell her how near I am to my goal.

Electa—I think, myself, it is time for her to know how near you are to your goal. Ebenezer, I want Alice to know the truth at once.

Ebenezer—You tell, her, Electa.

Enter Alice, C.

Jack—O, Alice, I only need two hundred and fifty-one more shares and I have won. My broker promises them to me today.

Electa—Alice, I forbid you to hold converse with that creature.

Jack—Now, look here, Aunt Electa, I demand your reasons for this treatment. I love Alice and I have told her so. I now tell you and I tell you frankly this innuendo has gone far enough. If I have done anything that Alice or you can take exception to, I am entirely ignorant of what it is. Since I first saw Alice, my every thought has been to win her respect—her love. Now, father, I demand an explanation.

Ebenezer—Ec—Electa, you explain.

Electa—John Harris, can you deny that you have been holding clandestine meetings with that—that Trixie Feodore?

Jack—I surely can, Aunt Electa. I never saw the woman in my life. I only know her by reputation.

Ebenezer (Weakly)—Jack!

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Enter Otway, R.

(Abruptly.)

Electa (To Otway)—What are you doing here?

Otway (In confusion)—I thought—I thought that Miss Lizzie was here.

Electa—Miss Lizzie! Lizzie is not here.

Otway—Ye-es, ma'am. (Exit, C.)

Electa (Turning to Jack)—You are sure you are not helping her to make her—her reputaion?

Jack—Judging from what I have seen (Looking at Ebenezer) she requires older men than I in that endeavor.

Alice—Aunt Electa, let me question Mr. Harris. He has been known to prevaricate to you. (To Jack) Will you tell me the truth?

Jack—Yes, Alice.

Ebenezer (Weakly)—Jack.

(Alice rings bell, two rings.)

Enter Otway, C.

Alice (To Otway)—Come here. (Alice carefully stands Otway face to face with Jack) Now, Mr. Harris, can you truthfully say that you are neither acquainted with, nor have you any secret alliance with the woman whose picture Otway brought into this house this morning?

Jack—I can, Alice, and more——

Otway (Quickly)—It wasn't Mr. Jack, Miss Alice. It was Mr. Eb——

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(Ebenezer falls from chair.)

Jack (Running to Ebenezer)—Father.

Electa—Otway, raise the window. Alice, go for my smelling salts, in the dresser in my room. Exit Alice, L.)

(Electa, Jack and Otway raise Ebenezer to chair or couch.)

(To Jack)—It will take more than this to convince me.

(Enter Alice, L., with Salts.)

(Electa holds salts for Ebenezer; Jack takes Alice to one side.)

Jack—Alice, need I say more? Don't you know I speak the truth?

Alice—I am well aware, Mr. Harris, that a servant's tongue can be bought.

Jack (Hurt)—Alice—

Alice (Crying)—To think that you could—that you— (Exit, L.)

Jack—You may go, Otway. (Exit, R.) Aunt, Electa, I wish to speak with father (Waiting) alone.

Electa—Of course, to patch up evidence. I distrust you both. (Leaving) Go ahead, I am anxious to see what your next move will be. Hadn't I beter call the valet, the errand boy, the male servant. Surely he needs posting. (Exit. C.)

Jack—Now, look here, father. It isn't a son's business to look into a father's closet of skeletons, but I tell you this business is hurting me with Alice. She

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believes me guilty of—of—well, you know better than I do, just the nature of the guilt.

Ebenezer—Jack, it's a question of two hundred and fifty thous—

Jack—I think you are mistaken, father. I am glad you spoke of the money, however. After all that is the main thing now. Now, to carry out my plans, which, by the way, I ask the privilege of keeping secret just one day longer, I need about twenty-six thousand dollars. If you will let me have that amount for six months I will be able to pay it back, every cent, at the end of that time.

Ebenezer (Dazed)—DeGraff—Trixie—and now, Jack. Two hundred and seventy-six thousand dollars! (Shaking himself together and rising) No, sir, not one damned cent. Hereafter your monthly allowance will be cut down to—to—let me see—

Jack—Father!

Ebenezer—Now, just tell me what you spend money for.

Jack—Why, father, I wouldn't know where to begin.

Ebenezer—Begin any place. Name one necessity.

Jack—Well, there is cab hire.

Ebenezer—Cab hire! Well, I suppose so. Let me see, I spend about five a month for cab hire—sixty a year. That's

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enough. (Producing paper and pencil and putting down sixty dollars.) What else?

Jack—It costs something to dress?

Ebenezer—Of course it does, but not more than three hundred a year. I dress on three hundred a year.

Jack—But father—

Ebenezer—That make three hundred and sixty a year. I guess that will have to do.

Jack—And then—

Ebenezer—And then what?

Jack—There are incidentals, father.

Ebenezer—Incidentals? We'll make it a hundred and forty a year. That makes just even five hundred a year. That is the limit in the future. You have been squandering something like three thousand a year. We will just cut that down to five hundred. I guess that cut will suit Eclecta.

Jack (Slowly)—Father, in the future I shall not look to you for anything. I shall go out from this house, my mother's home, tonight. You have never had cause to be ashamed of me and I hope never to give you cause; but my life is nearly ruined. The woman I might have won is lost to me. The position, I held almost within my grasp, is lost. There is nothing left but one step after another, all in the dark. Good-bye, father. (Exit, C.)

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Ebenezer (Calling weakly) —Jack—
Jack—(Rings bell, one ring.)

Enter Lizzie, R.

Lizzie—Here is a letter for you, sir

Ebenezer—A letter for me? Lizzie, tell Mr. Jack (Opening letter.) No, wait. (Aside.) From Trixie. That is all, Lizzie. (Exit Lizzie, L.) (Reading) Dear Old Ebe—Old, bah! Unless you see fit to settle within twenty-four hours the world shall know all. Not only that, but measures will be taken to do you bodily harm. Now, Ebe, old boy, take my advice and settle. My husband, Harold DeGraff;—her husband;—is a bad man to meddle with and when he finds out you really care for me, your life won't be worth two whoops in —

Your loving Trixie Feodore."

I guess I'd better get the money.

(Turns down light. Exit, C.

Enter Otway, R.

(Carrying bottle plainly labeled carbolic acid.)

Otway (tragically)—Life no longer holds anything but fatal charm. I have followed my adored one all over the house, but she will have none of me. She calls me a valet, and says no valet will ever get her, so I will write my farewell here. And then (picking up bottle) if I've got the nerve (sits at table and writes): Dear Lizzie—Your broken-

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hearted Otway has gone away—never to return. If you had loved me—but no more of that. I die by own hand. Yours even after death. Otway Bellows. (Folding.) I'll leave this where she will find it and then I'll drink death. (Exit, L.)

Enter Lizzie, C.

Lizzie (Dejected)—I did say that I'd never die for any man, but I am that distracted I'm not responsible. I'm not going to leave a fool note behind to be printed in the newspapers. If he had been man enough to have spoken up, we might have been happy by this time. What could you expect of a valet, a——. But it's no use. They'll find all that's left if they drag the lake over in the park. (Looking out of window) I guess the water route's good enough for me. I'm going to put on my heavy coat, for I know the water's cold. I wonder if my hat's on straight. (Exit, R.)

Enter Ebenezer, C.

(Carrying long hemp rope over one shoulder, a bottle marked poison in one hand and a revolver in the other. Throwing rope over chandelier he attaches it with noose down. Lighting light at desk he removes large envelope from pocket and lays it on desk.)

Ebenezer—There, my decision is made. Rather than face the world, I shall either (Placing his hands about

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throat and choking himself as he looks at rope) or (Acting as if drinking from bottle) or (acting as if shooting himself.) I have deeded all I own, every share of stock, every piece of real estate, everything to Jack. The only request I have is that I am leaving so suddenly, cut off in the prime of life, without the grasp of a friendly hand or the tear of a good woman. Where is Jack? If Jack only knew what I am about to do. I believe he would stop me. Yes. Jack would save my life. (Looking at bell.) But I'll not ring. It would make too much noise and I—I have only made two requests. They are that no one will be allowed to view the remains, and the burial is to be private. (Turns down light and pushes table under chandelier.) If the hemp don't do, I'll take the poison, and then—the gun—but I do hate noise. (Climbs upon table and placing head into noose he makes frantic attempt to kick table from under him. Failing, he takes hold of rope above head and swings out away from table.)

Enter Jack, C.

(Carrying revolver. He does not notice Ebenezer, but goes directly to desk and turns on light. Ebenezer gives spasmodic jerk.

Jack—It is all off. I shall never leave this house alive. Jackson says there is

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no more Great Eastern to be had. Alice—I've written a note to Alice, but she will never believe me.

Ebenezer (Choking voice)—Jack——

Jack (Picking up envelope)—What's this? Addressed to me.

Ebenezer (Choking)—Jack——

Jack—(Turning quickly)—Father! (Running to him Jack helps him down and into a chair) Father, what does it all mean?

Ebenezer—It's all yours, Jack. There in the envelope. Take it, Jack.

Jack (Securing envelope)—Father!

Enter Electa and Alice, C.

Ebenezer—It's your, Jack. All the real estate, all the money and all the stocks, Jack. There's a thousand shares of Consolidated Steel, a thousand of Great Eastern, all good——

Jack—Great Eastern—I'm saved.

Ebenezer—And, Jack, I'm going to have the Probate Court appoint you my guardian, Jack. I need a guardian.

Electa—Amen to that.

Curtain.

ACT III.

Same or different interior.

Enter Lizzie, R. Otway, L.

Otway--Lizzie!

Lizzie--I do not know you, sir.

Otway--It's Otway, Lizzie. Don't you know me?

Lizzie (Thinking)--Otway--Otway. I knew a man of that name once. He was a valet, but he is dead. I have his farewell letter here in my pocket. (Producing note.)

Otway--That is my note to you, Lizzie. I intended to die, but just as I uncorked the bottle and was about to swallow the fluid poison, the bell rang twice and what could I do but--but wait on Mr. Ebenezer.

Lizzie--I guess you are a pretty good valet after all. (Aside) I'm glad I didn't leave a letter. I don't have to say the water was too cold.

Otway (Hesitating)--What would you say if I told you I loved you, Lizzie? (Lizzie walks slowly all around, Otway following, always at about some distance.)

Lizzie--What, after death?

Otway--All the time, Lizzie. Now and hereafter.

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Lizzie—That won't do.

Otway—What won't do, Lizzie?

Lizzie—Why, the hereafter part.

Otway—How can I help it, Lizzie?

Lizzie—You'll have to help it. Supposing you would die first.

Otway—I want to. I don't want to live after you die.

Lizzie—Nor I don't want to be in love with a ghost.

Otway—Then what will you say if I tell you that I love you and will love you until death do us part? (Making quick step toward Lizzie, but she quick steps too.)

Lizzie—We are not neck and neck yet, Otway.

Otway (Seating himself)—No, Lizzie. you are still in the lead.

Lizzie—You are distanced, Otway.

Otway—Lizzie, come here.

Lizzie—I wish that bell would ring.

Otway (Taking big bottle, plainly marked poison from pocket)—Come here, Lizzie.

Lizzie—What is that, Otway?

Otway—A widow producer. Come here.

Lizzie—No.

Otway—Then I will drink. (Raising bottle.)

Lizzie—Don't drink, Otway (Running to him)—I'll come.

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Otway—Lizzie. Lizzie falls in his arms.) (Bell rings.) Then it is all fixed. We will be married, Lizzie?

Lizzie—Yes, Otway. (Turns light down.)

Otway (Picking up bottle)—Then I'll throw this away.

Lizzie—No, Otway. Save it. You may need it later. (Bell rings several rings.) (Exit Lizzie and Otway, one trying to go one way and one another.)

Enter DeGraff through window, R. (After looking around cautiously, he returns to window.)

DeGraff (Loudly)—Come on, Trix. It's all right.

Enter Trixie in male attire.

You see, there ain't no one here.

Trixie (Quietly)—Hal, you must keep quiet or we'll lose out.

DeGraff—Lose out, will we? I've come to get that two hundred and fifty thousand or something just as good, see?

Trixie (Stumbling against chair, making noise)—No, I don't see.

DeGraff—Come on, we might just as well go through the house until we find that old——

Trixie—What are you going to do with him, when we find him?

DeGraff—Squeeze him, Trix, for trifling with your affections. Hello, here comes some one. Get out quick. (Exit, R.)

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Enter Electa and Jack, C.

Jack (Turning on light)—Now, Aunt Electa, I want you to give up your idea of going back to the farm. We can't do without you here. The Governor will need you.

Electa (Heatedly)—I suppose so, now when he has found out that that flaming flame of his is Grafter's wife. No, Jack, I cannot be dependent upon your father's generosity any longer.

Jack—But, Aunt Electa, you will not be dependent on the Governor. Alice and you will be my guests; and right welcome guests, too. You see, the Governor hasn't a cent. He has deeded and given everything to me. O, of course he will have an allowance. You know I am now the Governor's guardian, and I want you to help me take care of them.

Electa—Well, I guess you will need help all right, Jack.

Jack—To be sure, and now, about that Great Eastern stock of yours?

Electa—That goes to Alice, Jack. If you can win her, you can keep the stock in the family, and I hope you can.

Jack—I have all the Great Eastern I need, Aunt Electa. I love Alice for herself alone, and I want you to help me convince her.

Electa—I don't know. She still has dreams of red-legged pictures and wild nights.

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Jack—That's all right. It shows that she thinks of me.

Electa—Yes, and what she thinks of you; but I'll do what I can. (Exit, L.)

Jack—You're all right, Aunt Electa. (Taking out cigar and lighting it) Well, everything has gone pretty well with me—Great Eastern is mine, and at the annual meeting, next week, I shall vote myself into the presidency. I have been taking an inventory and the truth is, I could plant a few Harris libraries without asking the assistance of the towns I wished to benefit; but I'll never do that. I'd rather provide homes for aged people, especially old men. They require care and attention to keep them out of mischief. I wonder how it appeals to Alice to know I am the Governor's guardian.

Enter DeGraff and Trixie, carrying
ropes, etc.

(Sitting down.) Well, she will have to admit that she will not be marrying a man's father's money, anyway, for it is all mine now. (DeGraff slips up behind and quickly removes Jack's cigar to his own mouth, at the same time tying a large handkerchief around Jack's head, covering mouth. Jack strikes out quickly, but Trixie wraps rope around his legs as DeGraff presents revolver to Jack's head.)

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DeGraff—Throw up your hands and don't talk.

Jack (Muffled)—How the devil can I talk?

Trixie—This isn't Ebe—

DeGraff—No? What makes you so anxious to see him?

Trixie—Don't you want to see him. Hal?

DeGraff—Yes, and I'm going to, too. Say, you, where's the old man?

Jack—The Governor?

DeGraff—Yes, the Gov—the old guy.

Jack—I don't know.

DeGraff—How can we call a servant?

Jack (Starting from chair, but falling back)—Push that button twice.

DeGraff—No, you don't. I'll call when I get ready. You sit right there. There's paper and a pen. Now write. (Presenting revolver) Do as I tell you or I'll shoot. (Jack reluctantly picks up pen and writes.) (Dictating): "Dear Governor—I have been abducted and am held out in the front yard, behind the lilac bushes. You must bring out one thousand dollars at once. You must come yourself. If any one else comes the money will be lost and I will be killed. I am held by a gang headed by Trixie Feodore." That will do, now sign. Hold your hands out in front of you. Hold 'em out! Straighter! Now, Trix, put

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that rope around his arms. That's it: good. (After tying arms securely they drag chair over to alcove and stand Jack up behind curtains. DeGraff replaces chair at desk.) Now, Trix, get out of the window. I don't want you to be seen. I'm going to ring. He said twice, but I'll try one ring first (Rings bell, one ring.)

Enter Lizzie. L.

DeGraff—Hello, is oldman Harris here?

Lizzie—Yes, sir.

DeGraff—Give him this note and be in a hurry.

Lizzie—Yes, sir. (Exit. L.)

DeGraff—Come on, Trix, and bring those ropes. Hurry up; we've got no time to lose. (Exit, C.)

Enter Ebenezer, L.

Ebenezer (Reading note)—Well, this is rich—Jack is kidnapped and by Trixie-wixey. Now, that's Jack's luck. Why couldn't it have been me? What? Go out to the lilac bushes and meet that gang? Not for Ebenezer. There would surely be noise and I do hate noise. I may need a guardian, but I guess the old man's too wise for—

Enter DeGraff and Trixie. C.
(Binding and gagging Ebenezer quickly.)

DeGraff—You won't go to the lilac bushes, eh? Well, you'll cough more

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than a thousand or you'll think the lilac bushes a cool place compared to the climate you'll soon be enjoying. Come on. (Exit, dragging Ebenezer through window.)

Enter Alice, R.

(Alice moves chair to table and writes.)

Jack (Muffled)—Otway! (Alice writes) Aunt Electa! Father! (Alice looks up) Alice!

Alice—Who calls?

Jack (Running words together)—Alice—I'm—in—the—alcove.

Alice (Going to window at right)—Surely someone called my name. Why, this window is open. (Closes window.)

Jack—In—the—alcove—Alice.

Alice (Crossing to alcove)—I wonder who it is. (Throwing back curtains) Jack Harris, you poor boy! (Taking hold of him and trying to pull him forward.)

Jack—Wait—I—can't—walk. Take—off—this—beastly—rag. (Alice takes off handkerchief and starts to untie rope.)

Alice—There, now, just a minute, Jack.

Jack—Hold on Alice. Alice, do you love me?

Alice—That has nothing to do with the case, Jack Harris.

Jack—Well, it's going to have a whole lot to do with whether you untie these ropes or not.

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Alice—Jack Harris, you are cruel. Of course, I must relieve you.

Jack—That's just what I want, Alice. I want to be released from this uncertainty. Do you love me?

Alice—I refuse to say, but I am going to untie these ropes.

Jack—No, you're not, not unless you love me.

Alice—Jack, I say I am. I'd release you even if you—if you——

Jack—Were mixed up with Trixie Theodore?

Alice—Yes, even then, but I'm not sure but that I'd choke her with these ropes.

Jack—Come here, Alice. You know you care, and you can't help knowing that I love you and will always. If you will be my wife, Alice, you may untie the ropes. If not, I ask you to leave me just as I am.

Alice—Jack, you are cruel.

Jack—I have been tied up worse than this ever since I first saw you, Alice. I have tried my level best to lift myself above the commonplace. You shouldn't expect too much of the past. A fellow is very seldom anything until he sees and loves the one woman. (Alice commences to untie rope quietly) You are the one woman, Alice, and nothing can ever change——(noticing that Alice is

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slowly unwinding rope). You do care. Alice. You give me your love—quick—quick—and now the arms. (Holding out arms. She laughs and runs away.) Here. Alice, do untie my arms. (Alice shakes her head) I can't begin to express my love for you with my hands tied this way.

Alice (Laughing)—You are doing very well, Jack.

Jack—O, come, this isn't half fair. (Running to bell button, but Alice is nearer and covers button with hand.)

Alice—Don't call any one, Jack. We don't need them. (Jack reaches and tries to kiss her cheek, but does not succeed.)

Jack (Dropping on knees)—If you love me, Alice, untie my hands.

Alice—O, no, Jack, you will have to try something new. You can't work me the same way twice.

Jack (Rising)—Hang it, Alice. I must get my arms around you pretty soon.

Alice—I guess there is plenty of time and just supposing Aunt Electa would come in and see us.

Jack—Let her come. I'd like to kiss her, too.

Alice—Jack! (Jack throws his looped arms over Alice's head and kisses her.)

Enter Electa, C.

Electa—Alice! Jack! What does this mean?

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Jack—That we are bound for life, Aunt Electa. Please come and untie this rope.

Alice—You can lift your arms over my head.

Jack—No. I can't, Alice, never. (Electa unties rope.) But I had forgotten——

Alice and Electa—What?

Jack—They have abducted the Governor and I am his guardian.

Electa—They—who?

Jack—Why, that woman, Trixie Feodore.

Electa—Jack!

Alice—I'm glad it wasn't you, Jack.

Jack—But it was; they tied me up first and made me write a note to the Governor and he came down here and fell into their hands. I don't believe they are very far away. (Going to desk and securing revolver). I'll catch them if I hurry.

Alice—Jack, you can't go—at least not alone.

Enter Otway, R.

Otway—A letter for you, sir.

Jack—What's this? (Reading) Dear Jack: I am a prisoner. I've told them I do not own a cent, that you have all the money, that you are my guardian. If you don't send Otway with two hundred and fifty thousand dollars they are going back to the house to get you. I don't know where I am or I'd tell you.

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Send the money, Jack. I don't like this Feodora woman in pants, but that don't make much difference, as they promise to shoot me if you don't send the money." (Whistling.) Two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. They won't have to come for me, for I am going to them. (Starting to leave.)

Otway—If you will pardon me, Mr. Jack, wouldn't it be better for you to remain right here, with the lights turned down. I think they are watching the house, sir, and if they come after you, I think we could be on the watch and take them, sir. We could then force them to take us to Mr. Ebenezer.

Electa—A good suggestion.

Alice—Do stay here, Jack.

Jack—I have it. Give me those ropes. Now, help me tie Otway as they tied me. Come here, Otway. Here's where they left me standing. What's the matter, man? Come here.

Otway—I think I will resign my position, sir.

Jack—Resign, nonsense. Alice, ring for Lizzie.

Otway—I'll stand, sir.

Jack (When Otway is tied)—That's all right. Aunt Electa, you stand over there behind that door. Alice and I will hide in here. (Pointing to alcove.)

Electa—Do you think that is quite

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proper, Jack?

Jack—Proper? Why, of course it's proper.

Electa—I think Alice should come with me.

Jack—No—you—don't. Aunt Electa. But we must hurry; they may return any minute. (Exit Electa, R., and Alice and Jack, C., after turning down light.)

Enter DeGraff and Trixie.

DeGraff—It's all right. He's tied up just where we left him. Hurry up. (They move toward alcove, where curtain is arranged so that Otway is partially visible. Just as they reach the alcove Jack steps out, covering DeGraff with revolver. Electa catches Trixie as she is running to window.)

Jack—Throw 'em up. Don't make a crooked move or I'll shoot.

Electa—Hold on, my boy. I guess I can take care of you.

Trixie—Let go of me (Jerking wildly) Damn you, let go of me.

Electa (Holding Trixie)—Why, it's a woman. It's ——. (Alice turns on light.)

Jack (To DeGraff)—Turn around. Walk to that chair. Alice, bring me a rope. (They wind rope around DeGraff and chair.) There, I guess that will hold you until I ask you a few questions.

Electa—Jack, come quick. She's too much for me.

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(Jack catches hold of Trixie's hand. Electa rings for Lizzie.)

Enter Lizzie, C.

Electa—Bring me one of your dress skirts, Lizzie. (Exit Lizzie, L.)

Otway (Weakly)—Lizzie.

Jack (Holding Trixie)—I want you to tell me where I can find the Governor.

DeGraff—What'll you give?

Jack—Well, Aunt Electa, we can afford to be generous, eh?

Electa—Yes, Jack.

Jack—We will give the lady her liberty, and will not prosecute her.

DeGraff—That won't do.

Enter Lizzie, L.

Lizzie—Will this do?

Electa—Very well. (To Trixie): Put on this.

Trixie (Kicking leg at Electa)—I won't do it.

Jack (Taking skirt and throwing over her head)—Put it on, I say, or you'll go to jail just as you are. (Trixie slowly puts on skirt.)

Lizzie—Otway Bellows, so you are going to jail too.

Otway—Please untie these ropes, Lizzie.

Lizzie—Never; I'm on the side of the law.

Otway—Lizzie, please.

Lizzie—You can take the prison, Otway.

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Jack—Come now, where is the Governor?

Enter Ebenezer, R.

(Clothes torn and muddy, generally disheveled appearance.)

Electa—Ebenezer!

Jack—The Governor, good.

Electa—How did you get away?

Ebenezer—They carried me away. Eclecta.

Jack—But, father, how did you get back?

Ebenezer—They left me tied up out in the stables, but I got away. My little Trixie-wixey purposely fixed the knots so I could get at them.

Electa—Ebenezer! Would you accept freedom from that—

Ebenezer—Of course. Ec-Electa. She isn't half bad. She has been cursed with bad associations.

Electa—Before she met you or since, Ebenezer?

Ebenezer—Now, look here, Eclecta. I have a guardian and he is the only one who has a legal right to criticize my actions. With his permission I am going to see justice done. I am going to send that man (Pointing to DeGraff) to the penitentiary. As for little Trixie-wixey, she won't be pestered by him any more—nor by me—if she will take this little purse and go to Europe (Handing her

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purse). And now, guardie, (To Jack) will you forgive your old dad for all the trouble he has caused?

Jack--Why, yes, father, willingly. Alice has consented to be my wife.

Ebenezer--Good, Jack, you're all right. You're both all right. You're a pair of Jacks. Say, guardie.

Jack--Well, father? (Trixie shakes purse in front of DeGraff.)

Ebenezer--What are you going to allow me?

Jack--Allow you, father, what do you mean?

Ebenezer--Why, for spending money, Jack. You know a fellow can't get around on air.

Jack--O sure; what will you need?

Ebenezer--I guess I can get along on--on say, three thousand a year.

Jack--Three thousand a year. What in the world will you do with three thousand a year?

Ebenezer--Why, Jack, a man's got to dress.

Jack--To be sure he has, but don't you remember you said yourself, not long ago, that a man could dress on three hundred a year. (Taking out pencil and paper.)

Ebenezer--Well, then there is cab hire.

Jack--Yes, about sixty a year, if I remember correctly. (Writing.)

Ebenezer—Then—then——

Jack—What then, father?

Ebenezer—Why, incidentals, Jack.

Jack—Of course, I had forgotten; well, I suppose ten a month, eh, we'll call it one hundred and forty for incidentals. That makes, let me see, just five hundred a year. I guess you'll have to make five hundred do, father.

Ebenezer—I guess not, Jack. I might as well tell you, right now, you are the Governor's guardian all right, that is, Jack, almost, but I just thought that it would be as well to reserve a few thousands for incidentals, Jack. (Rattling money in pocket). A real good guardian wouldn't object to that, Jack.

Alice—I should say not, Jack.

Jack—It's all right; it's all right. Under the circumstances it will not be necessary to make an allowance at all. (Ebenezer wilts.)

Electa—Well, I guess Jack is the right man for the Governor's guardian.
Curtain.

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